

Essington, PA -- Today, Congressman Joe Sestak, a former Fire Marshal in the Navy and a member of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus, spoke at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Tinicum Township Firehouse. The firehouse, Station 48, will be home to the newly formed Tinicum Township Fire Company, comprised of the former Lester and Essington Fire Companies.

— "It is my honor to be part of the Tinicum Township Fire Company's ribbon cutting ceremony today," said Congressman Sestak. "The opening of Station 48 represents a new chapter in public safety for the township of Tinicum. Both the Lester and Essington Fire Companies have a long history of heroic and dedicated service; combining them under one roof will maximize their ability to provide the entire township with coordinated fire protection services."

The Congressman presented a Congressional Record Citation congratulating the Fire Company on this milestone.

The ceremony comes on the heels of fire prevention week, which occurred October 6th-13th. The Congressman celebrated the week with fire companies in Brookhaven, Collingdale, Upper Darby, Radnor, Lower Providence, Chichester, and Drexel Hill. He plans to visit all the fire and police stations in the district.

"It is important to recognize the brave men and women who volunteer their time to serve our communities. There is something that sets first responders apart from other professions and that is the 'dignity of danger.' We ask these men and women who serve as our first responders to place their lives in harms way for our community," said Congressman Sestak. "As a Fire Marshal in the Navy, I know of the selfless commitment of first responders. It is vital we enact legislation that will encourage the recruitment and retention of these invaluable members of our community," stated Joe.

During his remarks today, Joe spoke about the value of both paid and volunteer firefighters and their wonderful public service. He said, in the case of volunteer firefighters, they are twice the citizen, who not only have jobs during the day, but volunteer time to serve the public on their time off.

Congressman Sestak has cosponsored bipartisan legislation to provide tax relief for volunteer first responders. The legislation, the Volunteer Firefighter's Tax Incentive Protection Act (H.R. 943), would allow state and local governments the flexibility to develop beneficial tax incentives, including property tax abatements, retirement awards, death benefits, health benefits, and state income tax credits, for encouraging recruitment and retention for volunteer firefighters and emergency medical personnel. Joe hopes that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and local municipalities will continue to work to provide their volunteer emergency responders with the appropriate incentives, rewarding them for the first-class service they offer the citizens of Pennsylvania.

Congressman Sestak introduced the Christopher Kangas Fallen Firefighter Fairness Act (HR 2224) to bring equity to fire fighter benefits, regardless of age or status as an apprentice or

trainee. The Congressman will be meeting with the International Association of Fire Fighters union to garner support for the Kangas legislation.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.